



# Forestry Workforce Development

*Working to Develop a Strong Workforce for the Future*

Forestry Topic 57

[www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)

February 2022

## The Future of Forestry

To ensure the success of our forest resources for future generations, we need to bolster and retain a strong and knowledgeable labor force. By identifying opportunities to develop and support a strong workforce, the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) strives to assist and stimulate forest industry at a local, regional, and statewide level. With forest industry being the third largest industry in Virginia, there are ample job openings but limited trained labor for many positions.

## Employment Opportunities

Forestry jobs span a wide variety of knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- ◆ Sawyers
- ◆ Forklift operators
- ◆ Welders
- ◆ Mechanics
- ◆ Computer, electronics, and technology
- ◆ Kiln operators
- ◆ Log and lumber graders
- ◆ Logging equipment operators
- ◆ Truck drivers

## Workforce Development Efforts

To improve training and development opportunities in the skilled trades needed in forest industry, we are:

- ◆ Developing pilot community college forestry training programs
- ◆ Working with Virginia economic development partners to connect with community colleges in Virginia with programs adaptable to the forest sector
- ◆ Formation of Virginia Wood Council to network industry, educational institutions, and government agencies for common goals.

## Audiences to Reach

- ◆ Veterans
- ◆ High school graduates
- ◆ 14-18 year olds
- ◆ Rehabbed offenders
- ◆ Those looking to switch career fields

## Goals of Training Programs

- ◆ To increase the labor force in forest industry
- ◆ To establish more training programs for forest industry across Virginia
- ◆ To increase awareness of positions available in forest industry
- ◆ To work with community colleges and technical school programs statewide to implement targeted training and educational programs for forest industry





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## A Cooperative Effort

To be successful, we must work together to develop the necessary workforce to support forest industry into the future.

### We Need Your Help!

We need input from forest industry, workforce development program staff, community colleges, vocational schools, and other educators.

- ◆ Workforce development contacts in various regions of the state
- ◆ Entities interested in offering scholarships or endorsing a training program in their area
- ◆ Input regarding the most critical staffing needs


- ◆ Communication tools for sharing opportunities and connecting employers with potential candidates
- ◆ Networking opportunities to share information and educate audiences

### Contact Us

Please reach out to provide input into this effort:

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